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# NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW

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ART. VII.—*Rob Roy, by the author of Waverley, Guy Mannering, and The Antiquary.* 2 vols. 12mo. New York, James Eastburn & Co. 1818.

IT is not possible that the fame or attraction of these writings should be increased, by fixing them upon any living author,—there is no living author, who would not add to his celebrity by owning them. If the writer, however, chooses to hide himself and ‘feed unenvied’ upon his glory, it is his own affair—we wish for his name, merely that we may refer to him more conveniently.

Some of his tales are admirable histories of Scotland, all of them lie chiefly there, and most of the characters are natives. His own country is the home and school of his genius—it is familiar to him, and thus, as the scene of his stories, it gives them an air of easy reality. He found it a new and unexhausted country in fiction, at least for his purposes; on all sides there was a boundless variety and striking distinctness in the face of the earth, the modes of life and the character of man, and just such a union of the chivalrous and wild with the later habits of a busier and more worldly race, as would enable him to be at once a poet and a practical, philosophical observer.

We have here his fifth tale, founded upon Scottish character, manners, antiquities and scenery. Like the others, it is supported in some measure by fact, and all are faithful sketches

of society and nature at different periods. They have the truth, without the formality and limitations of history, for men here are grouped and at work, very much as they are in life ; society never stands still and is never lost sight of, that battles may be fought or great men display themselves,—the anvil is ringing, as well that the poor traveller's beast may not go unshod, as that the soldier may be equipped, who is to fight for a realm.—It was said anciently of the Greek tragedies, that they were wholly ‘ of kings and princes, of rich or ambitious personages ;—you never see a poor man have a part, unless it be as a chorus, or to fill up the scenes, to dance or to be derided.’ There is a livelier and juster diversity in the views of things presented here. We are not kept forever upon the high grounds of life, and oppressed with the solemn air and motion, the perpetual stateliness of leading characters. There are cottages and workshops on the slopes and in the vallies, and beings in sight there, who are the secret strength and life of society,—the unobtrusive, poor and labouring have a place here, as important as that which they fill in the real world. And besides this natural mixture and diversity of classes, each individual is suffered to lay open his whole mind ; there is no attempt to give an artificial unity and condensation to the character, by placing him under one set of influences only, and thus forcing him to exhibit the workings of a single feeling, and all for the sake of producing a violent effect on us. He is here allowed to be affected naturally by every thing he encounters in the common course of things ; and the principle, that gives the character its form in one place, may change it a little with the change of circumstances.

The author seems to be at home every where, and know every thing. His knowledge, however, has not the air of learning, amassed to be told ; it is something gathered incidentally, whilst he was studying men in their pursuits, customs and amusements,—something fallen in with rather than sought. The commonest things, the lowest characters belong to the action,—it rarely stands still for the sake of description. You are in the midst of life, gaining knowledge as well as entertainment, by a process akin to actual experience and observation. Every man is in his proper situation, and suitable discourse is put into his mouth,—we have the peculiarities of his gait, the expression of his face, the tone of his voice, every thing, in short, which is significant of character, or that adds to its reality ;—and these are not given once for all in a formal

description, but they come out in connexion with his feelings, situation or employment, and vary with them. He is allowed to unfold himself, to practise upon others, to utter fine thoughts or foolish ones, and betray all his infirmities and motives and every influence that presses on him, without the dread that he is destined for a book and therefore upon his good behaviour. The author is extremely generous to his characters. He is never afraid of them, or anxious to give you a full preparatory account of them, to excite your interest, or save you from mistakes. If a man has any individuality, he is sure to have fair play ; and it is more than probable that you will at first be told, merely how he is regarded by people about him ; and if you receive a wrong impression, you may correct it as you go along, just as you are set right in the living world. The profusion and huddle of characters and interests make no disturbance and jostling, which are not sufficiently balanced. It is but setting powers against each other, so as to keep up a perpetual agitation.

If we come to his descriptions of nature, we find there a presence, a visibility, that sets us in the midst of things. He unfolds the region about him freely and easily, as creation is revealed in the sunshine,—by a full and yet noiseless disclosure ;—nothing is displaced ; the forms and relations of objects are undisturbed, and the light, in which they rest, gives perfect harmony. The facility and vividness of his descriptions shew that his heart is open to beauty and truth, and that he conveys the simple impression he has received. He is abroad for his own exhilaration, and the healthful exercise of his mind in minute, distinguishing observation ; and in all his pictures, there is a cordial exposure of beauty, reality, perfect life, as if the communication of his enjoyment made a part of it.

He does not always depend for the effect of his painting, upon the enumeration of particulars or a broad, complete presentment of things ; but a great deal upon your interest in the action and characters that are introduced. He knows that the mind, once kindled, will throw light all around it. You feel an interest in the place by your interest in what is passing there—you perceive a union between the action and the scene, so that a hint, a word is enough to open the whole upon you—you are made happy by finishing the picture yourself, and in the process, you are visited by old recollections and associations, till the prospect grows as familiar as home. His most scattered and irregular description, coming in here and

there in the midst of a wild and hurried narrative,—such as *Waverley's* night adventure on the heath, after his rescue,—has kept its hold on the memory, while others, more compact and finished, but less essential to the action, have faded. It may be well, some time after reading these works, when the excitement is gone, but the impression is unworn, to turn back to passages which interested us the most, and chiefly for description, and see how much their effect was owing to the excited state of the mind, to the watchful notice it took and the wide use it made of the smallest hints. We almost wonder on a second, cooler reading, that the effect should have been so powerful, and the scene so full and distinct.—And if we may judge from our own feelings, as distinct views are received from his light and rapid touches, some little intimations which make the mind busy in its own way, as from his more laboured pictures, which he sometimes draws as if for the mere pleasure they give him, and in looking at which we are obliged to follow him step by step, and observe the parts till we sometimes almost fail of a whole. He shews every where the greatest delicacy of feeling and observation, in the selection of some little picturesque circumstance, to suggest and illuminate every thing else, to provoke our imaginations to independent action and perception, and thus give a vivid reality to things. And we all know that trifles enter as largely into our poetical as our every-day happiness,—the imagination and affections attach themselves to the smallest things, and are carried by them into endless and ever-varying creations.

We may also remark his peculiar way of bringing us acquainted gradually with some new region, where we are to stay awhile. He conducts us, from time to time, as events may require, from one apartment to another or to new views of the same building, or to some unnoticed opening into the hills, or creek or cavern that lay hid in the windings of the shore. We feel the changes of season, and of day and night in their effect upon the prospect. The weary heath and moors sink us into ‘endless reverie,’ and our spirits are brisk as we come upon the heights. We carry from description like this, feelings that spring from beholding the world, rather than reading of it.

The author notices and preserves with perfect facility, all the connexions between the small and vast, the ludicrous and awful, the melancholy and thoughtless, which nature herself has ordained. And when he makes use of contrast,—and he

certainly makes a most powerful one,—it is never or rarely brought in violently, but in the same easy way with the diversities and irregularities, that enter into and enliven the established order of the world. Sometimes,—when we are absorbed by a picturesque or dramatic scene, and our curiosity and anxiety are so balanced that we can hardly turn over the leaf,—we meet with characters of a very different complexion from all which has wrought upon us so powerfully ; and they will be sure to enter at once into affairs in their own way, even at the risk of disturbing our rapture ;—but we never imagine that they were brought there to produce the effect of forced contrast, of violent transition,—they are in their places and talk and act as they should, sustaining relations to every thing about them, and obeying influences which perhaps they never think of. This natural contrast is observed every where in some shape or other, giving at one time a refreshing, at others an oppressive distinctness to objects, or presenting them in various lights and connexions, always deepening the interest which it threatens to thwart or divert. We need not admonish any reader, that Edie's gamesomeness in the storm and Elspeth's pledge at the funeral, enter, more than words can well express, into the incommunicable feelings which both those scenes leave in the heart. No one, who remembers the maniac Balfour in his fearful retreat, has forgotten the little light-footed guide that conducted Henry Moreton thither ' in the grey of the morning.'

And tenderness too is brought in, in the same vivid way, softening the harsher features of characters and actions, shedding all around the most assuasive influence, and yet possessing dignity and power in the midst of hard-wrung tears and sad remembrances. It is as the morning mist that hangs thinly on the cliff, or as the hush, the pause in the tempest. When Meg is conducting Bertram and Dinmont to the cavern on the sea-shore, at the moment when the scattered interests of the story are all thronging together, and she feels that the uses of life are nearly ended with her, an air of decay, of decline,—without the least of imbecility,—seems to pass over the grandeur and stern irregularity of her mind. ' She moved up the brook, until she came to the ruined hamlet, where, pausing with a look of peculiar and softened interest before one of the gables which was still standing, she said in a tone less abrupt, though as solemn as before, " Do you see that blackened and broken end of a sheeling ?—there my kettle boiled for forty

years—there I bore twelve buirdly sons and daughters—where are they now?—where are the leaves that were on that auld ash-tree at Martinmas?—the west wind has made it bare, and I'm stripped too. Do you see that saugh tree?—it's but a blackened rotten stump now—I've sate under it mony a bonny summer afternoon when it hung its gay garlands ower the poppling water. I've sate there, and," elevating her voice, "I've held you on my knee, Henry Bertram, and sung ye sangs of the old barons and their bloody wars. It will ne'er be green again, and Meg Merrilies will never sing blithe sangs mair."

We may call these works novels, or what we please,—they are after all nothing but views of the real world, given by a man who observes it widely, justly and feelingly, and passes by nothing however low, and shrinks from nothing however terrible, which God has placed here as a part of his system. The earth is large enough for the safe expansion and action of all minds however opposite, and he delights to contemplate the workings, and see the same principles struggling or playing freely in the various conditions of life, differently combined indeed and receiving different shades and modifications, according to the diversity of influences which help to make the character, and yet all betraying the universal alliance of man. With all the strangeness of his personages, the violence of the life he describes, and the local air of his sketches, his genius is still spread out over the earth,—‘one touch of nature makes the whole world kin,’—hardly a feeling or motive is given, but we all own it, or a course of action detailed, but it has authority apart from its historical truth. It is the truth more than the marvellous, that affects us in his most fearful sketches of an erring mind, self-persuaded of its supernatural power, and acquiring, from this very conviction, an energy and over-awing influence which help it in some degree to fulfil the destinies it unrols. It is the same truth that touches us, when he presents the mysterious creations of ‘the sleeping fancy,’ and especially the whimsical forms that crowd upon the mind just as it dawns from sleep, and the senses are faintly affected by outward objects. In the same spirit is the description of the almost visionary returns of memory, ‘the dreams of early and shadowy recollections,’ which broke upon young Bertram, as he was walking unconsciously among the scenes of his infancy. The author is always teaching us a large philosophy in the midst of visible scenes and living beings.

The imagination is never straitened by the perpetual reality

of things, nor does it lose itself in endless and vain illusions,—its excitement and adventures here are spontaneous and begin in truth, and have warmth, support and reach, yielding us always an untreachorous satisfaction, and the most wholesome practical influences. The earth is no longer a mere clod, of uneven surface, fertile mould and varied colour,—it acquires a new and moral interest by its power of carrying us to something higher, and leading us to connect all that we behold here with our own minds and with God.—The romantic and poetical, both in the human character and the world which helps to form it, are naturally blended,—no man will be made an idle visionary by the union between life and poetry in these works, for it is just such a union as is established by nature, and admirably fitted to open the whole mind and harmonize the character of such a being as man, with powers so various, but all given for his happiness and perfection, and naturally tending thither, and yet in danger of subjection to the lowest and most narrowing influences of this mixed world.

It was not to be expected that a writer should observe so minutely and justly, without investing objects with something of his own,—the imagination cannot be so busy, and the heart unmoved. But he does not visit the world with a diseased heart, and discolour its beauties, and turn them to false uses. ‘His mind apprehends objects and occurrences in their reality, and yet communicates to them a tincture of its own colouring and tone.’ And this is the way with all men who have sympathy with creation. He who observes and paints truly, must make his feelings, his delight a part of the picture, and there will be an exquisite accordance between what flows from himself and what he borrows from nature. And the reader of a kindred mind will trust more warmly in the truth of descriptions, which, besides presenting colour, situation and form, express distinctly his own secret though undefined feelings, in the prospect of like beauties, and thus interpret, as it were, his own heart.

With his love of the picturesque and romantic, the author unites a singular intimacy with men in the practical, common pursuits. There are very few economists or observers, who can talk more sagaciously of mere business and calculation, or send a young man into life with safer rules of conduct, or determine more accurately the influence of occupation, accident and every outward circumstance upon character and happiness. So far from disdaining our regular society, he is sometimes in



the midst of us, perfectly familiar with citizens and affairs, and the tradeful stir and habits of the town. Only give him strong character, and the free expression of it,—and he will be sure to observe and make something of it, whether it be found in the city or mountains. But he feels, and with reason, that in populous settlements, every thing is under cultivation, and tending too much to assimilation and consequent lassitude. He is weary and impatient there,—he cannot tolerate the shifting, arbitrary fashions of artificial life, the formalities and observances, which shew the condition of society more than the elements of character, what is accidental rather than what is essential, the present and fleeting, not the universal and everlasting in man. When he talks of mere ladies and gentlemen, and makes them witty, or puts them in love, it is hard to say which is most to be pitied,—he or they. The amiable and generous feelings are seldom and but poorly delineated in the merely domestic, industrious and cultivated,—they are reserved for beings formed upon a larger scale and of rougher and harder materials ; and in them these qualities are certainly exhibited to greater advantage, partly from their relation to the rest of the character, and partly from their possessing an originality and distinctness, and expressing themselves with a fervour and reckless vehemence, which are not quite so observable in more educated virtue.

He does not carry us into the wilderness of life, merely because it is new and attractive,—he there finds man in harmony with the landscape, and at home, in the presence of objects that were about him in infancy, which have grown into his soul, and are now secretly incorporated with all he feels of pride and sorrow and happiness. ‘The heather that I have trod upon when living, must bloom ower me when I am dead—my heart would sink, and my arm would shrink and wither like fern in the frost, were I to lose sight of my native hills ; nor has the world a scene that would console me for the loss of the rocks and cairns, wild as they are, that you see around us.’ In such a region, we are put upon a fresh study of real, though it may be daring and impetuous character ; if we are moved violently, we are yet purified and invigorated, and rescued from utter slavery to the habits and tone of subdued society.

We hope no one will find fault with the author’s vagabond characters, for their presumption in exhibiting sentiments and actions wholly incompatible with their condition. We should be sorry to think that the humour, poetry, sagacity, high feel-

ing and roguish propensities of the Beggar, were not the fair result of his way of life acting upon a neglected but gifted mind. The school of the world, we must remember, is free and generous, and has little system. It will indeed be sure to mould the character in some way or other,—but a man, who is wholly bare to its influences, will generally be formed by those which best suit his genius and natural tendencies ; he will find enough on every side to expand and invigorate his whole mind, and the result, however unfit for a useful life, may be magnificent beyond all that teaching could effect.

The author has his faults,—he must needs illustrate in himself the mixture of imperfection which he observes in every thing about him. But we can say of him, and it will hold true of every man of genius, that his failures are not to be found where his mind is most kindled. So long as he is given up to his subject, he is sustained and unerring ; but he fails, the very moment he begins to talk or trifle *confidentially* with the reader, or to display superfluously in himself the humour or drollery, which comes so admirably from his characters,—the very moment he forsakes invention and precipitates the story, by adopting the common artifices of relieving a hero, or lifting instead of attending him into new situations. But his failures often give us breathing time after excitement, and when he is ready, he falls into the natural course of things as easily as he deserted it.

Objections are made to the similarity that runs through all his works. Different persons resort perpetually to the same attitudes and motions, to shew their feelings to advantage, or to make their follies or infirmities more ludicrous. Majestic forms are placed again and again in the same commanding situations. Helen Campbell on the summit of the rock has no doubt brought to many a mind the Gipsy on the high bank that overhung the road, and the Gipsy perhaps has recalled the warriors on the turrets in the opening of Marmion. The situation is fine and never to be forgotten, especially in connexion with such beings,—and yet men, trees, steeples and chimnies may be seen almost every day, with the same advantage of light, effect of elevation and distinctness of outline.

But readers, who can perceive prominent resemblances, may not so readily detect minute discriminations, or probably we should not have heard quite so much about the sameness of his characters. He is not only rebuked for his attachment to gypsies, beggars, smugglers, &c. as Shakspeare will soon be

for his clowns, constables, witches and grave-diggers,—(for the vulgar and vicious are to be outlaws in fiction, however privileged in life,) but, what is worse, his low characters are thrown together as copies of each other, and his offence of borrowing from himself is set down in the same easy way, in which Miss Burney has been reprov'd for her everlasting Mr. Dubster, Mrs. Mittin, and other small teasing creatures, which, because she had done well with them once, she thought proper to introduce forever after. It may be that Meg, Elspeth, Edie and Mause are one and the same person, with only a slight change in circumstances, and so of Callum Beg, Dougal and others. Our friend Dandie Dinmont, the shrewd, resolute, free hearted Borderer, may be of the same family with Cuddie Headrigg, that inimitable compound of good-nature, timidity, selfish cunning and utter worldliness ;—and the kindred will probably be extended now to Mr. Andrew Fairservice. And we know not what objection there is to following the same character into different situations, allowing that it is variously and brightly developed. But we have not perceived this offensive sameness in the characters,—some of those, which have been thus strangely huddled together, are so broadly and essentially different, that it was mortifying to see the comparison made ; and the rest appear to be as distinct and individual, as we should expect of men in similar pursuits and condition in life, where there is no attempt to give them exaggerated and even violent peculiarities, for the sake of effect. The great question is, are you willing to have such persons introduced ?—and if so, will you consent to observe nice shades of character in the vulgar and wicked, and can you relish romantic feeling and a highly poetical language in men and women who are little better, after all, than rogues ? If you are not disposed to do and enjoy this, you are merely narrowing your field of observation, and with it your pleasures, and no doubt your own minds too.—One word more of the supposed sameness in the author's low characters,—they all have a strong *nationality*, very different from our own, and with which we are but little acquainted. It may be then, that the traits which belong to all impress us so strongly, that we pay less attention to individual differences than we should do in our own country, where, as the *nationality* is shared by all and observed by none, the study of character is confined to individual peculiarities.

In Rob Roy, we are not so much struck with the want of freshness, as with the imperfect execution, if not conception.

In the other tales, there are great defects in the story, but there is little or no anxiety to interest you in it,—the present scene is enough, the characters have sufficiently strong motives for what they do ; and so long as your attention is engrossed, and those in whom you are most interested are suitably disposed of, it is of very little importance that the events are sometimes clumsily woven together, and still less, whether the hero and his mistress are married at the end of the book or not. In fact, we would rather hear no more of them, than be called to witness the great stir at the close, merely to make people happy, whom we thought very little of in the course of the story. In the present work, however, there is a great attempt to make an interesting fable. Characters are brought forward, and sketched finely, and undertake a great deal and do little or nothing. The reader's curiosity is perpetually awakened by doubtful intimations, and he is extremely busy and ingenious to look into the mysteries of character and the bearings of plots, and after all he finds that very little was intended or at least accomplished, but an unfair excitement and baffling of his acuteness and eagerness. The story is in mist throughout, lest it should be seen through too soon and too easily ; and devices the most awkward are resorted to, to keep it in motion, when it threatens to come suddenly to a close. There is every where a want of object, of something about which these restless agents may revolve, and which may give meaning and consequence to the preparations which are going on. There is no commanding spirit here, whose presence is felt the moment he appears, not because his purposes are seen through, but from some nameless influence, which touches us as if we were by, and saw every thing, and had something to do or suffer with the rest. In parts, there is a great hurry and sudden shifting of scenes, arising from impatience, not from the bustle or thickening interest of the story. In other places, there is a dead pause for the hero to talk needlessly of himself, or to make explanations, and stand in the way of other people and of animated conversation. And even his explanations are lame,—he evidently wants information of what is going on at a distance, so that matters, which ought to be important, are left in obscurity. We do not carry from this tale the distinct remembrance of every thing, which is left by the others. And yet Rob Roy, though it have faults enough to put any other man in peril, has beauties with them that might make any other man immortal.

In the opening, we are made acquainted with the hero's father, a London merchant, who does very little for the story but set it a-going ; the author however is prodigal of his genius, and has given a sketch of this man which has great truth and spirit. The hero is nothing, unless you will take him for a satire personified upon the whole class. And we may say this of his brethren in the other tales. They are the only persons that the author labours to make something of, as if in pity for their incapacity, and they are the only indifferent beings that he has any concern with. You would never think of Frank Osbaldistone, were he not kindly telling the story, or sometimes teasing you by his insignificant interference with actions and characters that are wholly beyond him. But his father, who lives in a counting-house, and goes once to Holland upon a matter of no importance to any one but the Company, is never forgotten. Most writers would have fastened him upon us as an excellent moral lesson, and told us of his good habits and hours, and of his stern integrity,—in short, made him a very Thorowgood. Our author does as well, not by making us own that indeed the man led an honest life, but by exciting a deep respect for the principles and views of the merchant, and leading us to conclude the inevitable virtue and consistency of his actions, without enumerating them. He carries us into the man's mind by every thing which is related of his conduct or appearance, till we think a great deal more about his character than his particular pursuits, and are satisfied what would be his behaviour, if, instead of merchandise, he had turned to any other profession, or been cast in a different situation.

Frank was a little too romantic for trade, and his father sufficiently self-willed not to humour his boy. Owen, the head clerk,—a character made up of simplicity, affectionateness and the ledger,—does all he can to effect a reconciliation, but in vain ; and accordingly our hero is sent to Northumberland to cure his folly, by fair experience of the life, which country gentlemen lead. We feel the author very sensibly in the course of Frank's journey, but we pass over Mr. Morris with his portmanteau, and the Landlord's sunday dinner to his guests, as we probably shall many other scenes as admirable in their way, merely because it is too late in the day to give them at full. We wish, however, that Rob Roy had sustained throughout, all the interest which he excites as plain Mr. Campbell, the Scotch dealer in cattle. His character is

more poetical in the highlands, but less peculiar, though we would not intimate that there is in it the slightest incongruity.

Frank was now on his first visit to Osbaldistone Hall in Northumberland, the abode of his ancestors, and in the possession of his uncle, Sir Hildebrand. As he approached, he heard the sounds of the chase, and began to revolve the sad time he should have in a family of mere sportsmen.

‘A vision that passed me interrupted these reflections. It was a young lady, the loveliness of whose very striking features was enhanced by the animation of the chase and the glow of the exercise, mounted on a beautiful horse, jet black, unless where he was flecked by spots of the snow-white foam which embossed his bridle. She wore, what was then somewhat unusual, a coat, vest, and hat, resembling those of a man, which fashion has since called a riding-habit. The mode had been introduced while I was in France, and was perfectly new to me. Her long black hair streamed on the breeze, having in the hurry of the chase escaped from the ribbon which bound it. Some very broken ground through which she guided her horse with the most admirable address and presence of mind, retarded her course, and brought her closer to me than any of the other riders had passed. I had, therefore, a full view of her uncommonly fine face and person, to which an inexpressible charm was added by the wild gayety of the scene, and the romance of her singular dress and unexpected appearance.’ p. 58.

One of the sportsmen came up to announce that the chase was at a close.

‘I observed them both look at me and converse a moment in an under tone, the young lady apparently pressing the sportsman to do something which he declined shyly, and with a sort of sheepish sullenness. She instantly turned her horse’s head towards me, saying—“Well, well, Thornie, if you wont, I must, that’s all.—Sir,” she continued, addressing me, “I have been endeavouring to persuade this cultivated young gentleman to make inquiries at you, whether, in the course of your travels in these parts, you have heard any thing of a friend of ours, one Mr. Francis Osbaldistone, who has been for some days expected at Osbaldistone Hall?”’

‘I was too happy to acknowledge myself to be the party inquired after, and to express my thanks for the obliging inquiries of the young lady.

“In that case, sir,” she rejoined, “as my kinsman’s politeness seems to be still slumbering, you will permit me (though I suppose it is highly improper) to stand mistress of ceremonies, and to pre-

sent to you young Squire Thorncliff Osbaldistone, your cousin, and Die Vernon, who has also the honour to be your accomplished cousin's poor kinswoman." p. 59.

Die and Frank are at once upon the most intimate terms ; and her raillery, boldness and ingenuousness, (to say nothing of her horsemanship,) all dart upon us as playfully and brightly as the careless gleams of her beauty.

'But here we are in the court of the old hall, which looks as wild and old fashioned as any of its inmates. There is no great toilette kept at Osbaldistone, you must know ; but I must take off these things, they are so unpleasantly warm, and the hat hurts my forehead too," continued the lively girl, taking it off, and shaking down a profusion of sable ringlets, which half laughing, half blushing, she separated with her white slender fingers, in order to clear them away from her beautiful face and piercing hazel eyes.' p. 63.

She threw him the reins and disappeared, leaving the stranger most uncourtously in charge of her horse as well as his own.

'I called for a domestic, but was for some time totally unattended to ; which was the more provoking, as I could perceive I was the object of curiosity to several servants, both male and female, from different parts of the building, who popped out their heads and withdrew them, like rabbits in a warren, before I could make a direct appeal to the attention of any individual. The return of the huntsmen and hounds relieved me from my embarrassment, and with some difficulty I got one clown to relieve me of the charge of the horses, and another stupid boor to guide me to the presence of Sir Hildebrand. This service he performed with much such grace and good will, as a peasant who is compelled to act as guide to a hostile patrol, and in the same manner I was obliged to guard against his deserting me in the labyrinth of low-vaulted passages which conducted to "Stun Hall," as he called it, where I was to be introduced to the gracious presence of my uncle.

'We did, however, at length reach a long vaulted room, floored with stone, where a range of oaken tables, of a weight and size too massive ever to be moved a-side, were already covered for dinner. This venerable apartment, which had witnessed the feast of several generations of the Osbaldistone family, bore also evidence of their success in field-sports. Huge antlers of deer, which might have been the trophies of the hunting of Chevy Chase, were ranged around the walls, interspersed with the stuffed skins of badgers, otters, martins, and other animals of chase. Amidst some remnants of old armour, which had, perhaps, served against the Scotch, hung

the more valued weapons of Sylvan war, cross-bows, guns of various device and construction, nets, fishing-rods, otter spears, hunting poles, with many other singular devices and engines for taking or killing game. A few old pictures, dimmed with smoke, and stained with March beer, hung on the walls, representing knights and ladies, honoured, doubtless, and renowned in their day; these frowning fearfully from huge bushes of wig and of beard; and those looking delightfully with all their might at the roses which they brandished in their hands.

‘I had just time to give a glance at these matters, when about twelve blue-coated servants burst into the hall with much tumult and talk, each rather employed in directing his comrades than in discharging his own duty. Some brought blocks and billets to the fire, which roared, blazed, and ascended, half in smoke, half in flame, up a huge tunnel, with an opening wide enough to accommodate a stone seat within its ample vault, and which was fronted, by way of chimney-piece, with a huge piece of heavy architecture where the monsters of heraldry, embodied by the art of some Northumbrian chisel, grinned and ramped in red freestone, now jappanned by the smoke of centuries. Others of these old-fashioned serving men bore huge smoking dishes loaded with substantial fare; others brought in cups, flagons, bottles, yea, barrels of liquor. All tramped, kicked, plunged, shouldered, and jostled, doing as little service, with as much tumult, as could well be imagined. At length, while the dinner was, after various efforts, in the act of being arranged upon the board, the “clamour much of men and dogs,” the cracking of whips, calculated for the intimidation of the latter, voices loud and high, steps which, impressed by the heavy-heeled boots of the period, clattered like those in the statue of *Festin de pierre*, announced the arrival of those for whose benefit the preparations were made. The hubbub among the servants rather increased than diminished as this crisis approached; some called to make haste, others to take time; some exhorted to stand out of the way, and make room for Sir Hildebrand and the young squires; some to close round the table, and be *in* the way; some to open, some to shut a pair of folding doors, which divided the hall from a sort of gallery, as I afterwards learned, or withdrawing room, fitted up with black wainscot. Opened the doors were at length, and in rushed curs and men—eight dogs, the domestic chaplain, the village doctor, my six cousins, and my uncle.’ pp. 64—66.

It is proper to despatch here a great part of this strange family. The most we remember of five of the long-bodied cousins is, that they were drunken, stupid and lazy, except when they were after game; but even their stupidity is peculiar and various; the author must needs be original in every



thing. They all took a part in the rising, in 1715, for placing the Stuarts on the throne, and perished, some one way and some another. The best thing we can recal of any one of them, is Dickon's amusing himself on Sunday, with playing at pitch and toss by himself, his right hand against his left.—Old Sir Hildebrand is rough and generous—a cautious, disappointed Jacobite. He followed the chase with his boys and died about the same time of a broken heart. Justice Inglewood tells the best thing we hear of him. ‘When his eldest son, Archie, came to a bad end, in that unlucky affair of Sir John Fenwick's, Old Hildebrand used to hollow out his name as readily as any of the remaining five, and then complain that he could not recollect which of his sons had been hanged. So, pray hasten home, and relieve his paternal solicitude about your cousin.’

There are characters however to redeem the Northumbrian family, and which owe some of their effect to the strange group and the fine old castle, in which they are introduced. *Die Vernon* is not only very unlike, and very far beyond the cultivated females of the other stories, but our favourite among all the romantic heroines we have yet encountered. She is just such a civilized woman as the author might be expected to sketch successfully.—Her form and disposition begin to open upon us, the moment she appears, and the imagination is never fairly rid of the beautiful vision,—old Owen Feltham would have said of her, ‘she hangs upon all the retirements of a man like a perpetual enchantment.’ Her beauty is not ‘inventoried,’ as *Olivia* would have it, but comes out, as does her character, by degrees and always in connexion with something she feels or utters,—her mind appears to have formed her countenance and figure, as if to give itself a full, visible expression. We almost hear the tones of her voice ; and when she pours out her indignation, enthusiasm or devotedness, we see the attitude and action, perfectly natural, unconfined, unthought of—it is ‘beauty in the act of expanding into grandeur.’ A perpetual grace, lightness and over-frankness of feeling and manner, are united with the delicacy and dignity of an innocent and exalted spirit. There is nothing conventional about her ; she has known little of polished life or feminine sympathy. ‘I would fain,—she says,—have the freedom of wild heath and open air with the other commoners of nature’—and she seems indeed to have grown up with the wild plants around her, and to have been formed by the free, kind, adorning

touches of nature. But beneath her intrepidity and independence, there is a soothing tenderness, a quiet not enfeebling sadness, which soften and ripen the whole character, and give it an air the most exquisitely feminine.

Her cousin Rashleigh, Sir Hildebrand's youngest son, is not so original a being as Diana, nor quite so original as the author would have him, though unlike every thing at the Hall. He is of a hideous mind and person, but with nothing vulgar in the deformity of either. Once seen, he is fatally fastened upon the memory forever. He seems to fight against his personal defects in spite as much as ambition, while every mischievous and ferocious principle within him is nourished and kept in sound health and action, but all controlled by art and caution. He inspires at once dread and disgust, and these are not lessened, we suspect, by the rich tones of his voice, and the gentle but full flow of his conversation.

The strange darkness which hangs over the purposes of Rashleigh and the situation of Diana, is favourable to the effect of that part of the work in which they are chiefly concerned. For all that the reader knows, there may something come of this fine opening—and when we learn at the close, that Rashleigh has only been working some indistinct mischief at a distance, and that Diana, in the good old-fashioned way, has renounced every thing we cared for, for the sake of a lover, our only consolation is to go back to the time, when she was ‘the heath-bell of Cheviot and the blossom of the border.’ Her character was formed then in her utterly unprotected state,—professing a persecuted faith, doomed to a convent, or to be the wife of one of her scorned cousins, her father under sentence of death living in disguise beneath the same roof, and the secret known only to Rashleigh. And what were the relations between this man and herself?

“Let me know what Rashleigh says of me; for he is the grand engineer and first mover of all the machinery of Osbaldistone-Hall.

“But, supposing there was any thing to tell, Miss Vernon, what does he deserve that betrays the secrets of one ally to another?—Rashleigh, you yourself told me, remained your ally, though no longer your friend.”

“I have neither patience for evasion, nor inclination for jesting, on the present subject. Rashleigh cannot—ought not—dare not, hold any language respecting me, Diana Vernon, but what I may demand to hear repeated. That there are subjects of secrecy and confidence between us, is most certain; but to such, his commu-

nications to you could have no relation ; and with such, I, as an individual, have no concern."

"I replied, gravely, "that nothing but frivolous talk had passed between Mr. Rashleigh Osbaldistone and me on the state of the family at the Hall ; and I protested, that nothing had been said which left a serious impression to her disadvantage. As a gentleman, I said, I could not be more explicit in reporting private conversation."

"She started up with the animation of a Camilla about to advance into battle. "This shall not serve your turn, sir—I must have another answer from you." Her features kindled—her brow became flushed—her eye glanced wild-fire as she proceeded. "I demand such an explanation as a woman basely slandered has a right to demand from every man who calls himself a gentleman—as a creature, motherless, friendless, alone in the world, left to her own guidance and protection, has a right to require from every being having a happier lot, in the name of that God who sent *them* into the world to enjoy, and *her* to suffer. You shall not deny me—or," she added, looking solemnly upwards, "you will rue your denial, if there is justice for wrong either on earth or in Heaven."

"She sat down and resumed her composure, as soon as I entered upon the subject, and when I stopped to seek for the most delicate turn of expression, she repeatedly interrupted me, with "Go on—pray, go on ; the first word which occurs to you is the plainest, and must be the best. Do not think of my feelings, but speak as you would to an unconcerned third party."

"Thus urged and encouraged, I stammered through all the account which Rashleigh had given of her early contract to marry an Osbaldistone, and of the uncertainty and difficulty of her choice ; and there I would willingly have paused. But her penetration discovered that there was still something behind, and even guessed to what it related.

"Well, it was ill-natured of Rashleigh to tell this tale on me. I am like the poor girl, in the Fairy Tale, who was betrothed in her cradle to the Black Bear of Norway, but complained chiefly of being called Bruin's bride, by her companions at school. But besides all this, Rashleigh said something of himself with relation to me—Did he not ?"

"He certainly hinted, that were it not for the idea of supplanting his brother, he would now, in consequence of his change of profession, be desirous that the word Rashleigh should fill up the blank in the dispensation, instead of the word Thorncliff."

"Aye ? indeed ?" she replied ; "was he so very condescending ?—Too much honour for his humble hand-maid, Diana Vernon—And she, I suppose, was to be enraptured with joy could such a substitute be effected ?"

"To confess the truth, he intimated as much, and even farther insinuated"——

"What?—Let me hear it all!" she exclaimed hastily.

"That he had broken off your mutual intimacy, lest it should have given rise to an affection by which his destination to the church would not permit him to profit."

"I am obliged to him for his consideration," replied Miss Vernon, every feature of her fine countenance taxed to express the most supreme degree of scorn and contempt. She paused a moment, and then said, with her usual composure, "There is but little I have heard from you which I did not expect to hear, and which I ought not to have expected; because, bating one circumstance it is all very true. But as there are some poisons so active, that a few drops, it is said, will infect a whole fountain, so there is one falsehood in Rashleigh's communication, powerful enough to corrupt the whole well in which Truth herself is said to have dwelt. It is the leading and foul falsehood, that, knowing Rashleigh as I have reason too well to know him, any circumstance on earth could make me think of sharing my lot with him. No," she continued, with a sort of inward shuddering that seemed to express involuntary horror; "any lot rather than that—the sot, the gambler, the bully, the jockey, the insensate fool, were a thousand times preferable to Rashleigh;—the convent—the jail—the grave, shall be welcome before them all."

"There was a sad and melancholy cadence in her voice, corresponding with the strange and interesting romance of her situation.

"I told you in jest," she said, "that I disliked compliments—I now tell you in earnest, that I do not ask sympathy, and that I despise consolation. What I have borne I have borne—What I am to bear, I will sustain as I may; no word of commiseration can make a burthen feel one feather's weight lighter to the slave who must carry it. There is only one human being who could have assisted me, and that is he who has rather chosen to add to my embarrassment—Rashleigh Osbaldistone. Yes! the time once was that I might have learned to love that man—But, great God! the purpose for which he insinuated himself into the confidence of one already so forlorn—the undeviating and continued assiduity with which he pursued that purpose from year to year, without one single momentary pause of remorse or compassion—the purpose to which he would have converted into poison the food he administered to my mind—Gracious Providence! what should I have been in this world and the next, in body and soul, had I fallen under the arts of this accomplished villain!" pp. 159—163.

With this extract we take leave of *Miss Vernon*. We regard that part of the book, which belongs to her, as a precious

fragment, and unlike all that has come from the same hand. Every event is plainly designed for her and has but slender intimacy with any thing hereafter. There is nothing disturbing in the narrative—and very little variety of interest, but always a beautiful transparency and flow in the style, and great spirit in the conversation. The most bustling scene is at Justice Inglewood's, where the author brings together, in his peculiar way, a variety of characters, that he may set them against each other and observe the contrasts, and the influence which men unconsciously exert in bringing each other out.

In exchange for Frank, Rashleigh had been taken into the London House, and after what has transpired, we are not astonished to learn that during his uncle's absence, he ran off to Scotland, with remittances and effects, pretending that he was to take up bills granted by his uncle to certain Highland proprietors, of whom he had made large purchases of woods. Rashleigh's real object, after enriching himself, was, we believe, to embarrass the House, and thus prevent the payment of the bills. This would hasten a rising in the Highlands, by distressing those to whom they were originally granted. Hatred of the government, and an 'outbreak for the Stuarts' would follow. This was a state of things, which Rashleigh and other leading Jacobites were trying to produce, and they succeeded. This political intrigue is a dim, clumsy affair, and of little importance to us, except that it gives Frank an opportunity to visit Scotland, where he is to join Owen, the head-clerk, in looking up the stray partner.

We must now introduce Mr. Andrew Fairservice, a Scotch gardener, upon Sir Hildebrand's estate. He is exceedingly knavish, cowardly and selfish, well-informed in every thing Scotch, as bitter an enemy of papists as his worldly concerns will allow him to be, with as much superstition, shrewd humour, and poetical language and allusion, as the author has prepared us to expect from his countrymen in the humble classes. Andrew is of course very diverting and vexatious. He had lived at the Hall many a tedious year, in spite of his religious scruples and light purse. But he had reasons for it.

"I hae been flitting every term these four and twenty years ; but when the time comes, there's aye something to saw that I would like to see sawn, or something to maw that I would like to see mawn, or something to ripe that I would like to see ripen. and sae I e'en daiker on wi' the family frae year's end to year's end. And

I wad say for certain, that I am gaun to quit at Cannlemas, only I was just as positive on it twenty years syne, and I find myself still turning up the moults here, for a' that. Forbye that, to tell your honour the even down truth, there's nae better place ever offered to Andrew. But if your honour wad wush me to ony place where I wad hear pure doctrine, and hae a free cow's grass, and a cot, and a yard, and mair than ten pund of annual fee, and where there's nae leddy about the town to count the apples, I'se hold mysel muckle indebted to you."

"Bravo, Andrew; I perceive you'll lose no preferment for want of asking patronage."

"I canna see what for I should; it's no a generation to wait till ane's worth's discovered, I trow."

"But you are no friend, I observe, to the ladies."

"Na, by my troth, I keep up the first gardener's quarrel to them. They're fasheous bargains—aye crying for apricocks, pears, plums, and apples, summer and winter, without distinction o' seasons; but we hae nae slices o' the spare rib here, be praised for't! except auld Martha, and she's weel aneugh pleased wi' the freedom o' the berry-bushes to her sister's weans, when they come to drink tea in a holiday in the housekeeper's room, and wi' a when codlings now and then for her ain private supper." pp. 78, 79.

Frank applied to him for a guide to Glasgow, whereupon Andrew, who knew as well as any one how to 'cuitle up the daft young English Squire,' offered his own services, and after a journey, distinguished chiefly and from the beginning by Mr. Fairservice's knavery, the travellers reach Glasgow on Sunday. They follow the crowd to the cathedral, which, with the grave yard, and the congregation in the sepulchral church, is described with singular distinctness and simplicity. The whole scene is perfectly new to us, and the effect throughout is to inspire a still religious awe, and to recal a thousand early remembrances of Sabbath-days, and unfilled graves. A voice in the crowd whispers Frank to be on the bridge at midnight, and we are soon brought to one of the finest night scenes in a city that we can recollect. There is no vulgar terror here, nothing overdone for effect,—the growing stillness and desertion of the streets, the dim melancholy grandeur of the river and arches are enough of themselves to inspire deep and sad thought. The meeting of Frank and the stranger, their walk through the city to the prison, the chilling allusions of the outlaw to the risk he now encounters for his young companion, are all in the same spirit. And the half-savage joy, idolatry and alarm of Dougal the turnkey, when he recognises in

the stranger and at such a place, his own proscribed leader, serve but to heighten the effect of this perfectly simple and awful scene.—Frank finds Owen in the jail, where he had been cast on his arrival, by some ungrateful Scotch correspondents, who had claims against the House, but no mercy for its present embarrassments. Explanations and sympathy follow of course, and are soon interrupted, to our great satisfaction and the alarm of the intruders, by the arrival and bustling entrance of Baillie Nicol Jarvie, another correspondent of quite an opposite character. And once for all, we must say of Mr. Jarvie, that he is our chief delight among the men. He is an easy, knowing man, of a very ancient school, we should think, not perfectly original, and yet not the less agreeable for that. His prejudices, old proverbs, magisterial airs and commercial habits mix in so naturally with his vanity, benevolence, and blunt good nature, that they all appear to have been born with him. He is sagacious and often discreet, and has a very suitable love of life and comfort ; but with these he has a great share of natural intrepidity and self-esteem, and he is excessively fond of hearing himself talk, let the hazard be what it may. ‘I trow I hae a Scotch tongue in my head—if they speak, I’se answer.’ And it is delightful to hear him talk. Every thing is entertaining when he is by, and the author has dealt liberally with him, as he does with all his favourites. The Baillie is quite offended at finding strangers in the jail at this hour, and orders the doors to be secured, that he may examine them after he has had a talk with Mr. Owen upon matters of business. This is soon despatched, and then he begins his scrutiny.

‘The first whom he approached was my mysterious guide, who, seated on a table, with his eyes firmly fixed on the wall, his features arranged into the utmost inflexibility of expression, his hands folded on his breast with an air betwixt carelessness and defiance, his heel patting against the foot of the table, to keep time with the tune which he continued to whistle, submitted to Mr. Jarvie’s investigation with an air of absolute confidence and assurance, which for a moment, placed at fault the memory and sagacity of the acute and anxious investigator.

“Ah ! Eh ! Oh !” exclaimed the Baillie. “Conscience ! it’s impossible—and yet—no ! Conscience, it canna be ! And yet again—Deil hae me ! that I suld say sae—Ye robber—ye cataran—ye born deevil that ye are, to a’ bad ends and nae gude ane—can this be you ?”

“E’en as ye see, Baillie,” was the laconic answer.

"Conscience ! if I am na clean bumbaized—you, ye cheat-the-wuddy rogue, you here on your venture in the tolbooth o' Glasgow ? What d'ye think's the value o' your head ?"

"Umph—why, fairly weighed, and Dutch weight, it might weigh down one provost's, four baillies', a town clerk's, six deacons', besides stent-masters"—

"Ah, ye reiving villain !" said Mr. Jarvie. "But tell ower your sins, and prepare ye, for if I say the word"—

"True Baillie," said he who was thus addressed, folding his hands behind him with the utmost *nonchalance*, "but ye will never say that word."

"And why suld I not, sir ?" exclaimed the magistrate—"Why suld I not ? Answer me that—why suld I not ?"

"For three sufficient reasons, Baillie Jarvie—first, for auld langsyne ;—second, for the sake of the auld wife ayont the fire at Stuckavrallachan, that made some mixture of our bluids, to my own proper shame be it spoken, that has a cousin wi' accounts, and yarn winnles, and looms, and shuttles, like a mere mechanical person ;—and lastly, Baillie, because if I saw a sign o' your betraying me, I would plaister that wa' with your harns ere the hand of man could rescue you !"

"Ye're a bauld desperate villain, sir," retorted the undaunted Baillie ; "and ye ken that I ken ye to be sae, and that I wadna stand a moment for my ain risk."

"I ken weel," said the other, "ye hae gentle bluid in your veins, and I wad be laith to hurt my ain kinsman. But I'll gang out here as free as I came in, or the very wa's o' Glasgow tolbooth shall tell o't these ten years to come."

"Weel, weel," said Mr. Jarvie, "bluid's thicker than water ; and it lies na in kith, kin, and ally, to see mots in ilk other's een, if other een see them no. It wad be sair news to the auld wife below the Ben of Stuckavrallachan, that you, ye Hieland limmer, had knockit out my harns, or that I had kilted you up in a tow. But ye'll own, ye dour deevil, that were it no your very sell, I wad hae grippit the best man in the Hiелands."

"Ye wad hae tried, cousin," answered my guide, "that I wot weel ; but I doubt ye wad hae come aff wi' the short measure, for we gang-there-out Hieland bodies are an unchancy generation when you speak to us o' bondage. We downa bide the coercion of gude braid-claith about our hinderlans ; let a be breeks o' freestone, and garters o' iron."

"Ye'll find the stane breeks and the airn garters, ay, and the hemp cravat, for a' that, neighbour," replied the Baillie. "Nae man in a civilized country ever played the pliskies ye hae done—but e'en pickle in your ain pock-neuck—I hae gi'en ye warning."

"Well, cousin," said the other, "ye'll wear black at my burial ?"



"Deil a black cloak will be there, Robin, but the corbies and the hoodie craws, I'se gi'e ye my hand on that. But whar's the gude thousand pund Scots that I lent ye, man, and when am I to see it again?"

"Where it is," replied my guide, after the affectation of considering for a moment,—“I cannot justly tell—probably where last year's snaw is.”

"And that's on the top of Schehallion, ye dog," said Mr. Jarvie; "and I look for payment frae you where ye stand."

"Ay," replied the Highlander, "but I keep nather snaw nor dollars in my sporran. And as to when you'll see it—why, just when the king enjoys his ain again, as the auld sang says."

"Warst of a', Robin," retorted the Glaswegian,—“I mean, ye disloyal traitor—Warst of a'! Wad ye bring Popery in on us, and arbitrary power, and a foist and a warming-pan, and the set forms, and the curates, and the auld enormities o' surplices and cearments? Ye had better stick to your auld trade o' theft-boot, black-mail, spreaghs, and gill-ravaging—better stealing nowte than ruining nations.”

"Hout man, whisht wi' your whiggery," answered the Celt, "we hae kenn'd ane anither mony a lang day. I'se take care your counting-room is no cleaned out when the Gillon-a-naillie come to redd up the Glasgow buiths, and clear them o' their auld shop-wares. And, unless it just fa' in the preceese way o' your duty, ye manna see me oftener, Nicol, than I am disposed to be seen." vol. ii. pp. 20—23.

During this interview, means are found of putting into the stranger's (we may as well say at once Rob Roy's) hands, a letter which Diana had given Frank when he left the Hall. It was from her father, a leading Jacobite, addressed to Rob, and requiring, as far as we understand, that Rashleigh should give up the papers he had absconded with. Rashleigh and Rob, we must remember, are associates, at least for political purposes. Long before this they had robbed the gauger Morris, who was travelling to Scotland with Government money and despatches. And since Rashleigh's credit was too low to enable him to 'put off the paper' he had taken from the House, it was now secreted in the Highlands. The amount of all this is that we are to be carried thither to see the land and the tribes. Rob invites the Baillie and Frank to visit him in the glens and he will see what can be done—and they leave the gaol together; Dougal having fled beforehand; but he had wisely left the door unclosed and carried off the keys, that Rob might meet as few hindrances in his escape as possible.

“I tell you, Robin,” said the magistrate, “in my puir mind. if ye live the life ye do, ye shuld hae ane o’ your gillies door-keeper in every jail in Scotland, in case o’ the warst.”

“Ane o’ my kinsman a baillie in ilka burgh will just do as weel, cousin Nicol—so, gude night or gude morning to ye ; and forget not the Clachan of Aberfoil.”

‘And without waiting for an answer, he sprung to the other side of the street, and was lost in darkness. Immediately on his disappearance, we heard him give a low whistle of peculiar modulation ; which was instantly replied to.

“Hear to the Hieland deevils,” said Mr. Jarvie ; “they think themselfs on the skirts of Benlomond already, where they may gang whewing and whistling about without minding Sunday or Saturday.” p. 29.

This is the third introduction of Mr. Campbell, or Rob Roy, or, as he says by and by, ‘my foot is on my native heath and my name is Mac Gregor.’ He was well born, and though his early business was that of a drover, a thriving, honest dealer in cattle, his pride of lineage and love of a wild life are unimpaired. As the Baillie says,

‘The times cam hard, and Rob was venturesome. It wasna my faut—it wasna my faut ; he canna wyte me. I aye tauld him o’t—And the creditors, mair especially some grit neighbours o’ his, grippit to his living and land ; and they say his wife was turned out o’ the house to the hill-side, and sair misguided to the boot. Shamefu’ ! shamefu’ !—I am a peacefu’ man and a magistrate, but if ony ane had guided sae muckle as my servant quean, Mattie, as it’s like they guided Rob’s wife, I think it suld hae set the shabble that my father the deacon had at Bothwel-brigg a-walking again. Weel, Rob cam hame, and fand desolation, God pity us ! where he left plenty ; he looked east, west, south and north, and saw neither hault nor hope—neither bield nor shelter—sae he e’n pu’d the bonnet ower his brow, belted the broadsword to his side, took to the brae-side, and became a broken man.” p. 61.

Take him then for a warm-hearted, shrewd, strong-bodied adventurer and outlaw, trusting to his prowess as much as Donald Bean trusted to his craft, with devoted followers on every hand to support him in resisting the law, levying black-mail, and putting down the king.

We shall now follow the Baillie, Frank and Andrew Fair-service to the Highlands. If the author is ever more successful in one kind of description than another, we suspect it is when

he describes heaths, and low, swampy regions, that are desolate and yet tame.

‘The road which we travelled, had become wild and open, so soon as we had left Glasgow a mile or two behind us, and was growing more dreary as we advanced. Huge continuous heaths spread before, behind, and around us in hopeless barrenness, now level and interspersed with swamps, green with treacherous verdure, or sable with turf, or, as they call them in Scotland, peat-bogs, and now swelling into huge heavy ascents, which wanted the dignity and form of hills, while they were still more toilsome to the passenger. There were neither trees nor bushes to relieve the eye from the russet livery of absolute sterility. The very heath was of that stunted imperfect kind which has little or no flower, and affords the coarsest and meanest covering, which, as far as my experience enables me to judge, mother Earth is ever arrayed in. Living thing we saw none, except occasionally a few straggling sheep of a strange diversity of colours, as black, bluish, and orange. The sable hue predominated, however, in their faces and legs. The very birds seemed to shun these wastes, and no wonder, since they had an easy method of escaping from them; at least I only heard the monotonous and plaintive cries of the lapwing and curlew, which my companions denominated the peasweep and whaup.’ p. 75.

It was now a time of trouble in the Highlands. Every thing indicated jealousy and bitterness towards all that belonged to the king or came from the low country, and parties of soldiers were out to suppress the disaffected and especially to take the celebrated freebooter, Rob Roy. Our travellers had determined to pass the night at the little inn of Aberfoil, on the other side of the Forth. It was preoccupied by some of these soldiers, who had determined to be alone, but Frank and the Baillie would venture in, in spite of the sullen remonstrances of the landlady, and we should have been sorry to lose one of the liveliest sketches in the book.

‘The interior presented a view which seemed singular enough to southern eyes. The fire, fed with blazing turf and branches of dried wood, blazed merrily in the centre; but the smoke, having no means to escape but through a hole in the roof, eddied round the rafters of the cottage, and hung in sable folds at the height of about five feet from the floor. The space beneath was kept pretty clear, by innumerable currents of air which rushed towards the fire from the broken panel of basket-work which served as a door, from two square holes, designed as ostensible windows, through one of which was thrust a plaid, and through the other a tattered

great coat; and moreover, through various less distinguishable apertures in the walls of the tenement, which, being built of round stones and turf, cemented by mud, let in the atmosphere at innumerable crevices.

‘At an old oaken table, adjoining to the fire, sat three men, guests apparently, whom it was impossible to regard with indifference. Two were in the Highland dress; the one, a little dark complexioned man, with a lively, quick, and irritable expression of features, wore the trews, or close pantaloons, wove out of a sort of chequered stocking stuff. The Baillie whispered me, that “he behoved to be a man of some consequence, for that naebody but their Duin-héwassels wore the trews; they were very ill to weave exactly to their Highland pleasure”

‘The other mountaineer was a very tall, strong man, with a quantity of reddish hair, freckled face, high cheek-bones, and long chin—a sort of caricature of the national features of Scotland. The tartan which he wore differed from that of his companion, as it had much more scarlet in it, whereas the shades of black and dark green predominated in the chequers of the other. The third, who sate at the same table, was in the lowland dress, a bold, stout looking man, with a cast of military daring in his eye and manner, his riding dress showily and profusely laced, and his cocked hat of formidable dimensions. His hanger and a pair of pistols lay on the table before him. Each of the Highlanders had their naked dirks stuck upright in the board beside him, an emblem, I was afterwards informed, but surely a strange one, that their compotation was not to be interrupted by any brawl. A mighty pewter measure, containing about an English quart of usquebaugh, a liquor nearly as strong as brandy, which the Highlanders distil from malt, and drink undiluted in excessive quantities, was placed before these worthies. A broken glass, with a wooden foot, served as a drinking cup to the whole party, and circulated with a rapidity, which, considering the potency of the liquor, seemed absolutely marvellous. These men spoke loud and eagerly together, sometimes in Gaelic, at other times in English. Another Highlander, wrapt in his plaid, reclined on the floor, his head resting on a stone, from which it was only separated by a wisp of straw, and slept, or seemed to sleep, without attending to what was going on around him. He also was probably a stranger, for he lay in full dress, and accoutred with the sword and target, the usual arms of his countrymen when on a journey. Cribs there were of different dimensions beside the walls, formed, some of fractured boards, some of shattered wicker work or plaited boughs, in which slumbered the family of the house, men, women, and children, their places of repose only concealed by the dusky wreaths of vapour which arose above, below, and around them.

‘Our entrance was made so quietly, and the carousers I have described were so eagerly engaged in their discussions, that we escaped their notice for a minute or two. But I observed the Highlander who lay beside the fire,’ (and who turned out to be Dougal, the turnkey,) ‘raise himself on his elbow as we entered, and, drawing his plaid over the lower part of his face, fix his look on us for a few seconds, after which he resumed his recumbent posture, and seemed again to betake himself to the repose which our entrance had interrupted.

‘We advanced to the fire, which was an agreeable spectacle after our late ride, during the chillness of an autumn evening among the mountains, and first attracted the attention of the guests who had preceded us, by calling for the landlady. She approached, looking doubtfully and timidly, now at us, now at the other party, and returned a hesitating and doubtful answer to our request to have something to eat.

‘She didna ken,” she said, “she wasna sure there was ony in the house,” and then modified her qualification,—“that is, ony thing fit for the like of us.”

‘I assured her we were indifferent to the quality of our supper; and looking round for means of accommodation, which were not easily to be found, I arranged an old hen-coop as a seat for Mr. Jarvie, and turned down a broken tub to serve for my own. Andrew Fairservice entered presently afterwards, and took a place in silence behind our backs. The natives, as I may call them, continued staring at us with an air as if confounded by our assurance, and we, at least I myself, disguised as well as we could, under an appearance of indifference, any secret anxiety we might feel concerning the mode in which we were to be received by our predecessors.

‘At length, the lesser Highlander, addressing himself to me, said, in very good English, and in a tone of great haughtiness, “Ye make yourself at home, sir, I see.”

“I usually do so,” I replied, “when I come into a house of public entertainment.”

“And did she na see,” said the taller man, “by the white wand at the door, that gentlemens had taken up the public-house on their ain business?”

“I do not pretend to understand the customs of this country; but I am yet to learn,” I replied, “how three persons should be entitled to exclude all other travellers from the only place of shelter and refreshment for miles around.”

“There’s nae reason for’t, gentlemen,” said the Baillie, “we mean nae offence—but there’s neither law nor reason for’t—but as far as a stoup o’ gude brandy wad make up the quarrel, we, being peaceable folk, wad be willing”——

"Damn your brandy, sir!" said the Lowlander, adjusting his cocked-hat fiercely upon his head; "we desire neither your brandy nor your company," and up he rose from his seat. His companions also arose, muttering to each other, drawing up their plaids, and snorting and snuffing the air after the manner of their countrymen when working themselves into a passion.

"We are three to three," said the lesser Highlander, glancing his eyes at our party; "if ye be pretty men, draw;" and, unsheathing his broadsword, he advanced on me. I put myself in a posture of defence, and, aware of the superiority of my weapon, a rapier or small-sword, was little afraid of the issue of the contest. The Baillie behaved with unexpected mettle. As he saw the gigantic Highlander confront him with his weapon drawn, he tugged for a second or two at the hilt of his *shabblie*, as he called it; but finding it loth to quit the sheath, to which it had long been secured by rust and disuse, he seized, as a substitute, on the red-hot coulter of a plough which had been employed in arranging the fire by way of a poker, and brandished it with such effect, that at the first pass he set the Highlander's plaid on fire, and compelled him to keep a respectful distance till he could get it extinguished. Andrew, on the contrary, who ought to have faced the Lowland champion, had, I grieve to say it, vanished at the very commencement of the fray. But his antagonist, crying, "Fair play! fair play!" seemed courteously disposed to take no share in the scuffle. Thus we commenced our rencounter on fair terms as to numbers. My own aim was, to possess myself, if possible, of my antagonist's weapon; but I was deterred from closing for fear of the dirk which he held in his left hand, and used in parrying the thrusts of my rapier. Meantime the Baillie, notwithstanding the success of his first onset, was sorely bested. The weight of his weapon, the corpulence of his person, the very effervescence of his own passions, were rapidly exhausting both his strength and his breath, and he was almost at the mercy of his antagonist, when up started the sleeper from the floor on which he reclined, with his naked sword and target in his hand, and threw himself between the discomfited magistrate and his assailant, exclaiming, "Her nainsell has eaten the town pread at the Cross o' Glasgow, and py her troth she'll fight for Baillie Sharvie at the Clachan of Aberfoil—tat will she e'en." And, seconding his words with deeds, this unexpected auxiliary made his sword whistle about the ears of his tall countryman, who, nothing abashed, returned his blows with interest. But being both accoutred with round targets made of wood, studded with brass, and covered with leather, with which they readily parried each other's strokes, their combat was attended with much more noise and clatter than serious risk of damage. It appeared, indeed, that there was more of bravado than of seri-

ous attempt to do us any 'injury; for the Lowland gentleman, who, as I mentioned, had stood aside for want of an antagonist when the brawl commenced, was now pleased to act the part of moderator and peace-maker.

"Haud your hands—haud your hands—aneugh done—aneugh done! the quarrel's no mortal. The strange gentlemen have shown themselves men of honour, and gi'en reasonable satisfaction. I'll stand on mine honour as kittle as ony man, but I hate unnecessary bloodshed."

"It was not, of course, my wish to protract the fray—my adversary seemed equally disposed to sheath his sword—the Baillie, gasping for breath, might be considered as *hors de combat*, and our two sword-and-buckler men gave up their contest with as much indifference as they had entered into it.

"And now," said the worthy gentleman who acted as umpire, "let us drink and gree like honest fellows—The house will haud us a'. I propose that this good little gentleman that seems sair fourfoughen, as I may say, in this tuilzie, shall send for a tass o' brandy, and I'll pay for another, by way of Archilowe, and then we'll birl our bawbees a' round about, like brethren."

"And fa's to pay my new ponny plaid," said the larger Highlander, "wi' a hole burnt in't ane might put a kail-pat through? Saw ever ony body a decent gentleman fight wi' a firebrand before?"

"Let that be nae hinderance," said the Baillie, who had now recovered his breath, and was at once disposed to enjoy the triumph of having behaved with spirit, and avoid the necessity of again resorting to such hard and doubtful arbitrament; "Gin I hae broken the head," he said, "I sall find the plaister. A new plaid sall ye hae, and o'the best—your ain clan-colours man; and ye will tell me where it can be sent t'ye frae Glasgow."

"I needna name my clan—I am of a king's clan, as is weel kenn'd," said the Highlander, "but ye may tak a bit o' the plaid—figh, she smells like a singit sheep's head! and that'll learn ye the sett—and a gentleman, that's a cousin o' my ain, that carries eggs down frae Glencroe, will ca' for't about Martimoës an' ye will tell her where ye bide. But, honest gentleman, neist time ye fight, an' ye hae ony respect for your athversary, let it be wi' your sword, man, since ye wear ane, and no wi' thae het culters and firebrands, like a wild Indian."

"The dame, who was all officiousness so soon as the storm had blown over, immediately undertook to broil something comfortable for our supper. Indeed, nothing surprized me more, in the course of the whole matter, than the extreme calmness with which she and her whole household seemed to regard the martial tumult that had taken place. The good woman was only heard

to call to some of her assistants, "Steek the door—steek the door! Kill or be killed, let naebodv pass out till they hae paid the lawin." And as for the slumberers in those lairs by the wall, which served the family for beds, they only raised their shirtless bodies to look at the fray, ejaculated "Oigh! oigh!" in the tone suitable to their respective sex and ages, and were, I believe, fast asleep again ere our swords were well returned to their scabbards.' pp. 86—93.

A party of soldiers in search of Rob, arrive at the inn and make prisoners of our travellers, on suspicion. Dougal is soon after brought in captive, and commanded to tell where Rob is lurking, with the threat of a halter and the next tree. Whereupon he assumes the most roguish and impenetrable stupidity we have met with, and undertakes to be the guide. Nothing can be finer than the march.

'I shall never forget the delightful sensation with which I exchanged the dark, smoky, smothering atmosphere of the Highland hut, in which we had passed the night so uncomfortably, for the refreshing fragrance of the morning air, and the glorious beams of the rising sun, which from a tabernacle of purple and golden clouds, were darted full on such a scene of natural romance and beauty as had never before greeted my eyes. To the left lay the valley, down which the Forth wandered on its easterly course, surrounding the beautiful detached hill, with all its garland of woods. On the right, amid a profusion of thickets, knolls, and crags, lay the bed of a broad mountain lake, lightly curled into tiny waves by the breath of the morning breeze, each glittering in its course under the influence of the sun-beams. High hills, rocks, and banks, waving with natural forests of birch and oak, formed the borders of this enchanting sheet of water; and, as their leaves rustled to the wind and twinkled in the sun, gave to the depth of solitude a sort of life and vivacity. Man alone seemed to be placed in a state of inferiority, in a scene where all the ordinary features of nature were raised and exalted. The miserable little *bourocks*, as the Baillie termed them, of which about a dozen formed the village called the Clachan of Aberfoil, were composed of loose stones, cemented by clay instead of mortar, and thatched by turfs, laid rudely upon rafters formed of native and unhewn birches and oaks from the woods around. The roofs approached the ground so nearly, that Andrew Fairservice observed we might have ridden over the village the night before, and never found out we were near it, unless our horses' feet had "gane thro' the riggin'."

'The inhabitants of these miserable dwellings were disturbed by the noise of our departure: and as our party of about twenty



soldiers drew up in rank before marching off; we were reconnoitred by many a beldame from the half-opened door of her cottage. As these sybils thrust forth their gray heads, imperfectly covered with close caps of flannel, and showed their shrivelled brows, and long skinny arms, with various gestures, shrugs, and muttered expressions in Gaelic addressed to each other, my imagination recurred to the witches of Macbeth, and I imagined I read in the features of these crones the malevolence of the weird sisters. The little children also, who began to crawl forth, some quite naked, and others very imperfectly covered with tatters of tartan stuff, clapped their tiny hands, and grinned at the English soldiers, with an expression of national hate and malignity which seemed beyond their years.

‘It was not until we commenced our march that the malignity of the elder persons of the community broke forth into expressions. The last file of men had left the village, to pursue a small broken track formed by the sledges in which the natives transported their peats and turfs, and which led through the woods which fringed the lower end of the lake, when a shrilly sound of female exclamation, mixed with the screams of children, the hooping of boys, and the clapping of hands with which the Highland dames enforce their notes whether of rage or lamentation. I asked Andrew, who looked as pale as death, what all this meant.

“I doubt we’ll ken that ower sune,” said he. “Means?—It means that the Highland wives are cursing and banning the red coats, and wishing ill-luck to them, and ilka ane that ever spoke the Saxon tongue. I have heard wives flyte in England and Scotland—it’s nae marvel to hear them flyte ony gate—but sic ill-scrapit tongues as thae Hieland carlines’—and sic grewsome wishes, that men should be slaughtered like sheep—and that they should lapper their hands to the elbows in their heart’s blude—and that they suld dee the death of Walter Cuming of Guiyock, wha hadna as muckle o’ him left thegither as would supper a messandog—sic awesome language as that I ne’er heard out o’ a human thrapple:—and, unless the deil wad rise amang them to gie them a lesson, I thinkna that their talent at cursing could be amended. The warst o’t is, they bid us aye gang up the loch, and see what we’ll land in.” pp. 113—116.

Dougal carried the party to a pass where a fatal contest with some of Rob’s followers was inevitable, and in the confusion of the battle he crept into a thicket and Frank after him, leaving the Baillie and Andrew to provide for themselves. We have pitied the honest Baillie all along, for being plunged into such irregular and perilous life; and we confess, we could scarcely laugh, when we saw him dangling in mid

air from a thorn branch, which caught him in his flight as he was stepping from one rock to another. It was much more diverting to see Andrew on the top of a cliff, fully possessed that he was in the midst of danger, and capering and writhing to avoid the balls, which he conceived to be whistling around him.

Helen Campbell, Rob's wife, was at the head of the Highland party—an injured, fierce, iron-hearted woman, presented in majestic attitudes, and rarely speaking but in wrath, indignation or anguish. Her character is overdone and, we should think, fails of the effect intended. She has very little to do, but the author has connected with her one of his most awful scenes. As she was distributing dooms of death amongst the prisoners, wild and then wailing sounds are heard at a distance—a party approaches, led by her two sons, and from them she learns that Rob is made captive. It appears that Rashleigh had proved false to the Stuart interest, and his discoveries had brought the King's troops very suddenly among the disaffected clansmen. His next object was to put Rob into their hands, and so he employed the cowardly gauger, Morris, to inveigle him within reach of the loyal troops, and he was taken. He had however required Morris to stay behind as a hostage.

‘The wife of Mac Gregor commanded that the hostage exchanged for his safety should be brought into her presence. I believe her sons had kept this unfortunate wretch out of her sight, for fear of the consequences ; but if it was so, their humane precaution only postponed his fate. They dragged forward at her summons a wretch already half dead with terror, in whose agonized features I recognised, to my horror and astonishment, my old acquaintance Morris.

‘He fell prostrate before the female Chief with an effort to clasp her knees, from which she drew back, as if his touch had been pollution, so that all he could do in token of the extremity of his humiliation, was to kiss the hem of her plaid. I never heard entreaties for life poured forth with such agony of spirit. The ecstasy of fear was such, that, instead of paralyzing his tongue, as on ordinary occasions, it even rendered him eloquent, and, with cheeks pale as ashes, hands compressed in agony, eyes that seemed to be taking their last look of all mortal objects, he protested with the deepest oaths, his total ignorance of any design on the person of Rob Roy, whom he swore he loved and honoured as his own soul. In the inconsistency of his terror, he said, he was but

the agent of others, and he muttered the name of Rashleigh. He prayed but for life—for life he would give all he had in the world;—it was but life he asked—life, if it were to be prolonged under tortures and privations;—he asked only breath, though it should be drawn in the damp of the lowest caverns of their hills.

‘It is impossible to describe the scorn, the loathing and contempt, with which the wife of Mac Gregor regarded this wretched petitioner for the poor boon of existence.

“I could have bid you live,” she said, “had life been to you the same weary and wasting burthen that it is to me—that it is to every noble and generous mind. But you—wretch! you could creep through the world unaffected by its various disgraces, its ineffable miseries, its constantly accumulating masses of crime and sorrow, you could live and enjoy yourself, while the noble-minded are betrayed—while nameless and birthless villains tread on the neck of the brave and the long-descended, you could enjoy yourself, like a butcher’s dog in the shambles, batten on garbage, while the slaughter of the brave went on around you! This enjoyment you shall not live to partake of; you shall die, base dog, and that before yon cloud has passed over the sun.”

‘She gave a brief command in Gaelic to her attendants, two of whom seized upon the prostrate suppliant, and hurried him to the brink of a cliff which overhung the flood. He set up the most piercing and dreadful cries that fear ever uttered—I may well term them dreadful, for they haunted my sleep for years afterward. As the murderers, or executioners, call them as you will, dragged him along, he recognised me even in that moment of horror, and exclaimed, in the last articulate words I ever heard him utter, “O, Mr. Osbaldistone, save me! save me!”

‘I was so much moved by this horrid spectacle, that, although in momentary expectation of sharing his fate, I did attempt to speak in his behalf, but, as might have been expected, my interference was sternly disregarded. The victim was held fast by some, while others, binding a large heavy stone in a plaid, tied it round his neck, and others again eagerly stripped him of some part of his dress. Half-naked, and thus manacled, they hurled him into the lake, there about twelve feet deep, drowning his last death-shriek with a loud halloo of vindictive triumph, above which, however, the yell of mortal agony was distinctly heard. The heavy burden splashed in the dark-blue waters of the lake, and the Highlanders, with their pole-axes and swords, watched an instant, to guard, lest, extricating himself from the load to which he was attached, he might have struggled to regain the shore. But the knot had been securely bound; the victim sunk without effort; the waters which his fall had disturbed, settled calmly over him, and the unit of that life for which he had pleaded so strongly, was forever withdrawn from the sum of human existence.’

After the blood has curdled at this, it is quite restoring to hear from Mad. de Stael, that ‘the love of life appears to man the most ridiculous and the most vulgar of feelings; and the laughter, which seizes upon mortal beings, when contemplating the object of one of their fellow-mortals, suffering under the apprehension of death, must be confessed to be a noble attribute of the human understanding.’

We have next a fruitless negotiation between Frank, on the part of Helen, and the commander of the enemy, for Rob’s freedom. Accordingly, Rob takes his escape upon himself, though he was to hang next morning and was surrounded by guards. He effects his object as the party is crossing the Forth at sunset; and the attempts to retake or destroy him, by the horsemen in the river, or along the steep banks, the shouts, straggling pistol shots, splash of water, the wildness of the country and the gathering darkness altogether are enough to put one out of breath.

Then follows the interview between the travellers and Rob at the inn and afterwards at his ‘puir dwelling,’ and then the final parting. The poetry of Rob’s character is here given with great warmth and eloquence, and it is the more affecting from its harmony with the picturesque scene that surrounds him, and from the contrast between the ever-changing lights, in which his heart is laid open, and the undisturbed, funereal gloom that hangs over Helen Campbell. But we can extract no more.

We never intended to tell the whole story, or how all were made happy in the end, who deserved to be,—and we are the more willing to stop here, as the remaining fifty pages,—if we except ‘the rescue’ and Rashleigh’s death at the very close,—are a sad falling off from all that the author ever wrote.—If we were asked, which of the tales we liked most, we should say, *The Antiquary*; and which least,—*Rob Roy*. But this is a very shallow sort of criticism, and a very unfair way to treat the present work. It has blemishes enough as a whole; but how many parts are there,—perfectly new ones too,—which could come from no other mind on earth! The descriptions of Scottish scenery appear to us as fine as any in the other stories; and we have rarely felt that we were looking upon old prospects. We have here many new and very minute views of Highland manners and usages, and much eloquent expression of the wild, free character and feelings of the mountaineers. It may not be easy to find in the other

tales more graphic descriptions of buildings, especially their interior, than are given here. We do not allude merely to the Hall and the cathedral ; the author is perhaps even more successful in the Highland hovel, and in the contrast between its smoke and filth, its wretched furniture and vulgar brawls, and the fresh, tranquil, pastoral beauties which surround it. He always delights in the picturesque effect of such scenes. But we must not go over the ground again. On the whole, there is matter here for a better book, and proofs on all hands that the author is not exhausted, that he has not yet forsaken invention and become an artisan.

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**ART. VIII.**—*Reports of cases argued and determined in the Supreme Judicial Court of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Vol. xiv. Containing the cases for the year 1817. With a Supplement. By Dudley Atkins Tyng, Esq. Counsellor at Law. Boston ; Cummings & Hilliard, 1818.*

It is but fourteen years since the legislature of this Commonwealth provided, by statute, for the appointment of a reporter of the decisions of the Supreme Judicial Court ; yet the reports of those decisions have already swoln to fourteen volumes.

About thirty years ago, the Russian code of laws was reprinted in this country, in the compass of a common spelling-book. Many visionary men, at that time, exclaimed with wonder at the comparatively massy bulk of our own statutes, and seriously talked of simplifying our jurisprudence and reducing all our laws into a narrow, elementary compend. Reformers sprang up, like locusts, in the time of Shays' Insurrection—and our statute-book now bears witness to their folly. These crude notions had their day and disappeared. The lessons of a long experience were confirmed by more correct and enlarged views of the principles of civil liberty, and our jurisprudence was suffered to remain without further attack, and to be gradually improved by the wisdom of enlightened and practical men. The discussions of the principles of government, which were called forth by our secession from Great Britain and the establishment of new constitutions, convinced all rational minds that there can be no security for property or liberty, where the laws are as short and few as in the Russian code.—In a despotism, it is of little